



February 21, 2017

Senator Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walker, Representative Ziobron and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Maryse Wicker and I live in Mystic. I am the mother of Mathieu Wicker who has I/DD.

I am testifying on behalf of my son on the impact of the Governor's budget on people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD). Please find my son's testimony below:

Please vote to fully fund DDS community and residential services. It is vital for me to continue to get funding.

My name is Mathieu Wicker, I speak to you through my mother, Maryse Wicker. I am non-verbal, 40 years old, severely autistic, profoundly mentally retarded. I also have an anxiety disorder that prevents me from having a normal social life. I live in a group home in Pawcatuck with 3 other men with intellectual and development disabilities.

It is very hard to be me, I would prefer to be like you and most people, "normal" as it is called. I work hard to meet my goals. I continue to progress and improve behaviorally. After many years of working hard to just step outside of the van in the community, I now hold 2 part time jobs. I have two staff to keep me safe while I work. I still need to be sedated for doctor and dentist appointments because of my severe anxiety.

Because of my autism it is so hard for me to do the basic everyday tasks that most people take for granted and I need help with almost everything.

Taking a shower, cooking and eating, tying my shoes. I have staff 24 hours a day on 3 shifts. I like them very much, they take good care of me and help me go through my daily activities.

I come in front of you every year to ask to keep my funding, because if it were to be stopped I would lose the roof over my head; I would not be able to pay for even basic things such as food and heat. I would also lose the staff who help me so much. Imagine what it would be like if you had to ask someone each year if you could keep your home, your roommates, the basic necessities of life. Each year, unsure if that answer would be yes. I and the people who love me worry a lot about this.

Please keep the funding for me and people like me with disabilities. Thank you again from the bottom of my heart.

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